

TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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This German woodcut of St. Coloman (Nuremberg, 1613), attributed to Hans Springinklee, a pupil of Albrecht Dürer, is taken from: *Heiliges Heidentum: die Hatzschulte bis zum Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts* (224pp, Karl Robert Lange, welche Nachfolger Hans Koster, 3 7845 7220 0). St. Coloman holds a model of a church in his right hand. Thought to be either Irish or a Scot, he was hanged in 1013 in Stockerau near Vienna; the locals, unable to understand what he was saying, thought he was a spy. His name is evoked for the leading of horses and cattle. (See also the illustration on page 14.)

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Among this week's contributors

PAUL BAILEY's most recent novel is <i>Old Soldiers</i> , 1980.	PAUL M. KENNEDY's books include <i>The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery</i> , 1976, <i>The Rise of the Anglo-German Autogonism</i> , 1860-1914.	1968, and is a Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.
JULIA BRIGGS is the author of <i>Night Visions: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story</i> , 1977.	HOWARD LARNESS is a lecturer in English at the University of Warwick.	CAROL RUMENS's most recent collection of poems is <i>A Necklode</i> , 1979.
HUGH BRIGGS is the author of <i>Toqueville</i> , 1979.	HUGH LLOYD-JONES is Regius Professor of Greek at the University of Oxford. His most recent book is <i>Myths of the Zodiac</i> , 1978.	WILLIAM SCAMMELL's most recent collection of poems is <i>Yes</i> , 1980.
PETER CONRAD's books include <i>Romantic Opera and Literary Form</i> , 1977, and <i>Imagining America</i> , 1980.	PHILIP MASON's books include <i>Poems of Domitius</i> , 1970, and <i>Kippling: The Glass, the Shadow and the Fire</i> , 1975.	SHEILA M. SMITH's <i>The O-Notion: the Poor in English Literature of the 1840s and 1850s</i> will be viewed shortly in the TLS.
RONALD ROSE's most recent book is <i>Shogun: A Portrait of a Japanese Village</i> , 1979.	JOHN HEATON-STUBBS's most recent collection of poems is <i>The World of the Poet</i> , 1978.	PAUL SMITH is Professor of Modern History at the University of Southampton.
ALISTAIR SILLIT's parallel text editions of <i>Verdiana and Heine</i> were published in 1979.	PETER PORTER's most recent collection of poems is <i>The Cost of Seriousness</i> , 1978.	T. M. STEVART's novels <i>The Goidy</i> , 1974, <i>The Madonnas</i> , 1977, and <i>Eulalia</i> , 1978.
PHYLIS GROSSKURT's biography of Horace Ellis was published in 1980.	S. S. PRAWFA's books include <i>Karl Marx and World Literature</i> , 1975.	ERIC STOKES's books include <i>English Utilitarians and the 19th Century</i> , 1977, and <i>The Poem and the Poet</i> , 1978.
JOHN THOMPSON's most recent collection of poems is <i>The World of the Poet</i> , 1978.	C. J. LAWSON's books include <i>Henry Under Stress</i> , 1972, and <i>Gulliver and the Gentle Reader</i> , 1979.	STUART SUTHERLAND is Professor of Experimental Psychology at the University of Sussex.
D. A. N. JONES's novels include <i>Darwin in Paris</i> , 1968, and <i>Never had it so good</i> , 1969.	PETER KEMP's critical study <i>Marx and Sport</i> was published in 1974.	JOHN THOMPSON is a lecturer in American History at the University of Cambridge.

On the turn of the tide

By Paul M. Kennedy

STEPHEN ROSKILL: *Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty The Last Naval Hero* 430pp. Collins, £12.95. 0 00 216278 4

CHARLES BEATTY: *Our Admiral A Biography of Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty* 211pp. W. H. Allen, £7.95. 0 491 02588 X

ANTHONY POLLEN: *The Great Gunner Scandal The Mystery of Jutland* 280pp. Collins, £7.50. 0 00 216298 9

Of all Britain's wartime naval leaders since Nelson, none (except perhaps Monmouth) was as popular with the fleet and the nation as David Beatty; and of all the battles fought by the Royal Navy since Trafalgar, none has been more intensely debated and scrutinized than the clash at Jutland early in the summer of 1916. Yet, whereas many observers, regarded Beatty as a second Nelson, Jutland was certainly no Trafalgar. On May 31, 1917, the first anniversary of the battle, Beatty privately confessed that while most Britons still thought it "a day for rejoicing", he viewed it as "a day for sackcloth and ashes". Even when the High Seas Fleet steamed into the Firth of Forth to surrender in November 1918, neither Beatty nor his men were fully satisfied. Somehow the Royal Navy's wartime role had been less glorious, and less substantial, than had been expected; and that acrimonious post-mortem, the so-called "Jutland controversy" of 1920s, together with the severe tactical setback to the shipbuilding programme and the acceptance of a mere parity of numbers with the United States Navy, all suggested that the Senior Service had either lost its way. And so it had. For paradoxically, this had occurred when Beatty was at the height of his fame and influence, as Commander of the Battle Cruiser Squadron (1913-16), then Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet (1916-19), and finally as First Sea Lord (1919-27). How could a "second Nelson" exist in such tarnished, disappointing circumstances?

The books reviewed here are directly concerned either with Beatty or with Jutland, and, to a greater or lesser extent, with the larger issue of what was happening to the Royal Navy as it entered the modern age. Of the three works Stephen Roskill's biography of Beatty is by far the most substantial, which is scarcely surprising given the author's distinguished naval, historical, and literary background. At Jutland, Beatty's role is central, and his utilization of a range of sources is impressive. Although there are one or two factual errors, and some of Roskill's statements can be disputed, the overall result is very impressive indeed.

A picture of Beatty which emerges in this study is by no means an uncritical one. His bravery and dash during the Nile campaign and the Boxer uprising are unquestionable, as was his ability to think clearly and express himself in plain, direct, and staff-officially approved language. He was later to be criticized for the rigidity of his fighting instructions, especially the emphasis upon strict "beat-battle" tactics and the dislike of independent thought—and when the text moves to the Grand Fleet he was even more scathing, the necessary to encourage initiative, he indicated the potentialities of the fleet as a whole, and the dangers posed by "beat-battle". He was also, in a number of ways, concerned about the morale of the lower deck and the popularity with the sailors. Beatty was a natural leader of men, both in wartime and in peacetime. After 1915, when he had been the Navy against the

rivalry of the RAF and the general indifference of the British public. But Roskill also reveals how Beatty used his social connections to aid his new career, and was not above writing to the sympathetic George V (for the royal secretary) in the hope of influencing policy. The ostentatious display of the wealth which his marriage brought and his aristocratic regard for aristocratic society were not attractive features, nor are his autocratic snooty outbursts to today's reader. Furthermore, Beatty's youthful, driving ambition, once it had been realized in a meteoric rise and crowned by numerous honours, became transformed into an obsessive defence of his reputation—as was evident in his efforts to amend the 1920 "Harpur Report" with its criticisms of the actions of the Battle Cruiser Squadron at Jutland.

But the most remarkable revelations of all—particularly for the non-naval expert—are Roskill's descriptions of Beatty's relationship with his exceedingly wilful and spoiled wife, Ethel, the daughter of an American millionaire. Although contriving a divorce with her first husband in order to marry this handsome, up-and-coming naval officer, Ethel was determined to pursue her own desires, social and personal, and later caused Beatty frequent embarrassment and misery. Yet he, who was not homeless and he had relations with various women, in particular with Eugenie Godfrey-Faussett, wife of George V's equerry and an officer friend of Beatty. In the numerous intimate letters which the admiral wrote to Eugenie, there is revealed the true Beatty, his strengths and weaknesses, his personal life and (most valuable) his candid views upon the Navy and naval policy.

Had the second naval biography of the admiral by his nephew Charles Beatty, appeared in a different year it might, perhaps, have escaped direct comparison with Roskill's weighty tome; but in any case it is an insubstantial work. This book, too, has a personal secret to reveal: that Beatty was born out of wedlock; and it adds the further unsavoury detail that the promiscuity of Beatty's wife was made abundantly clear when their second son was born suffering from a venereal ailment. Beatty had eliminated most of the service's weaknesses before 1914 now seems open to severe questioning.

Perhaps the most hair-raising defect of all was that the Navy possessed no effective fire-control system. The great cost of the pre-war naval race, the efforts to construct bigger and bigger warships, Jellicoe's many schemes to make up for the inferiority of the service's armaments, and his own (and his staff's) designs for the service's weaknesses before 1914 now seems open to severe questioning.

of Tushima is misdated (page 76), Beatty and Ethel are imagined to have persuaded "the Russians to become our allies against Germany" by visiting Kronstadt in 1913 (pages 62-67), and an un-... causing one to wonder whether the British publishing industry's present plight has led to the abandonment of using readers in scrutinizing draft manuscripts. It would be unkind to spend more time upon the historical errors in this book, the author of *Our Admiral* views it as a personal memoir, and tribute; but it has been difficult for this reviewer, at least, to avoid speculating how much Mr Beatty may now be learning about his uncle from Roskill's biography.

Apart from an excessive willingness to offer comments (some favourable, but most disapproving) upon the opinions of his American "opposite number", Professor Arthur Marder, Roskill's book emerges as a balanced and judicious work. It is so because, while offering new insights into Beatty's character and private life, he also sets this biography into a much larger framework so that it becomes, by degrees, a "life and times" account. The Battle of Jutland, for example, is analysed not simply in respect of Beatty's own role in it, but also for what it tells us of the state of the Navy at that time. And the general message is that, despite the various improvements which were made to the service as it was dragged, kicking and screaming, up to the nineteenth century, it was still deficient in so many respects. In Roskill's view, the Royal Navy's staff training was too rigid, its tactical tactics questionable, its experience of night-fighting non-existent, its missiles (torpedoes and torpedoes) defective, its command and communications problems manifold, its ships' designs flawed, and its strategic thinking backward. If this is so, then the record of what the service had eliminated most of the service's weaknesses before 1914 now seems open to severe questioning.

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Mandrake

Plantagenet and peasant, on the job
Heights a week, my Father ruled the workman's club
where twelve-pint men grew weighty at the bar
and billiard balls rolled peacefully to war,
He'd worried it, my Mother said, "That man
'd be as happy with a frying pan."
She took in Irish lodgers, slaved and queued,
half in love with epic recitation,
paid off the bills, complained, perfected looks
more dense than lovers' vows in library books.
The card-school pondered, two by two: "young Jakes"
(Mr's withering label) tilted bodychairs
and little fingers, gathering muscle for
the leap from maidenhood to hoxton drower.
My choices still have genders: cosy-sad
back home with Mum, or packing straight to hell with Dad.

William Scammell

Dreyer, who had plagiarized parts of Pollen's scheme but not enough to guarantee accurate fire control. Only in the early 1920s did the Royal Navy install Pollen's system into their warships and, in the same period, the Royal Commission on Awards and Inventions granted Pollen adequate compensation for the Admiralty's sorry treatment of his invention.

This remarkable tale is discussed at some length by Roskill but it is told in full by the inventor's son, Anthony Pollen, in *The Great Gunner Scandal*; this is a very competent book and, if it is coloured in parts by filial devotion, it is none the less useful to have this matter cleared up. It is, moreover, one of the few works of naval history which offers information upon the relationship between the Admiralty on the one hand and inventors and private contractors on the other. All too often scholars refer blithely to the "modernization" of the fleet without any consideration of the technical, fiscal, and institutional obstacles which need to be overcome in that process.

The Pollen story also sheds fresh light upon the contentious issue of Beatty's battlecruisers at Jutland, where a third of them were blown up by enemy shells. His famous remark that "There seems to be no interest in the warship which need to be overcome in that process." The Pollen story also sheds fresh light upon the contentious issue of Beatty's battlecruisers at Jutland, where a third of them were blown up by enemy shells. His famous remark that "There seems to be no interest in the warship which need to be overcome in that process."

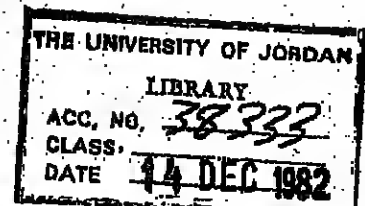
On the other hand, would it really have made that much difference to the overall outcome of the First World War had British warships been blessed with superior design and equipment? Arthur Pollen, and his son, clearly thought so; and, if *The Great Gunner Scandal* can be criticized, it is that when it turns from technical details to grand strategy and politics, its assertions become much more simplistic and questionable. But the Pollen were not alone in this assumption. After all, Beatty himself wrote that at Jutland he had been within reach of "the greatest victory the world had ever seen... and most popular naval historians tend to share this view."

point. It is, of course, a nonsense. A decisive British victory at Jutland, with (say) no major losses to the Grand Fleet and ten German capital ships sunk, would have altered the overall course of the war not one jot. Even so, it was, the results of that battle led, the strategic situation unchanged, the Royal Navy continued the exodus from the North Sea, and the German Navy had not the strength to dispute that command. Whether Scheer lost one ship or twenty was irrelevant. What Jutland was to have British pride, not its naval mastery. And most of the bluffing and puffing in the "Jutland controversy" of the 1920s was to do with personal reputations, not with strategic realities.

Yet that naval mastery which Beatty, no less than Nelson, took for granted was slipping away from Britain in these years for other reasons. Near the very end of his biography Captain Roskill notes that "the influence exerted on the British war by Beatty's fleet in 1914-18 was... the exercise of the navy's command in the war against Republicanism and Napoleonism France"; but he does not elaborate on this intriguing admission, and two other books reviewed here display no sustained interest in the larger context in which Beatty, Jellicoe, Fisher, Pollen and all the rest had to operate. Even today, it seems, naval history is overwhelmingly concerned with admirals, battles and guns.

But the ultimate reason why Beatty could never shake the historical stature and importance of Nelson was not to do with personalities or command structures or fire-control systems; it had to do with long-term economic and geo-political trends. The rising powers of the twentieth century, the United States, Russia and even Imperial Germany, were much less vulnerable to the workings of sea power than the Royal Navy's earlier opponents, the Spanish, Dutch and French Empires, had ever been. Against non-Atlantic, continent-wide states, the commercial blockade was slow and ineffective—although Britain's own economy remained uniquely vulnerable, especially in the U-boat. That new weapon was, moreover, so dangerous by 1917 that Beatty and the Admiralty were forced to keep the Grand Fleet out of much of the North Sea. In any case, Germany and its allies in the First World War could only be defeated by the application of massive military pressure, which reduced the Royal Navy to a secondary role and simultaneously weakened the country's manpower and financial slaws. By the end of the war, Britain was in no position to indulge in a naval race against a much more prosperous United States, and the real achievement of the Washington naval treaty which Beatty and his fellow Sea Lords so resented was to disguise the passing of Britain's naval primacy behind this agreement on fleet numbers.

In sum, the strategic circumstances of the era in which Beatty lived, made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for any British admiral to assume Nelson's mantle. In the 1914-18 conflict the Royal Navy could not of itself win the war; that was the task of the Allied armies. The navy's role, although vital, was essentially a negative one—to avoid losing control of the sea routes. In this sense, the size of the navy's losses at Jutland was relatively insignificant compared with the merchant-ship losses in the Atlantic during the following year. Beatty, for all his virtues (and vices) and for all his popularity, was a victim of these large historical tendencies. In the subtitle to his book, Roskill calls him "The Last Naval Hero", but one wonders if that to the right term. There were numerous British heroes during that war and even more in the one following, when the Royal Navy had to fight much harder to keep the oceans open to its own ships, the crews of the small ships, the commanders of submarines and aircraft, the convoy escorts, provide many examples of courage and resolve. What there was not were fleet commanders, whose actions decisively and positively altered the course of the war. In the post-Nelsonic age that was too much to expect.



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By Paul Bailey

JOSEPH HARTNER (Editor):
Uncollected Stories of William
Faulkner
766pp. Chato and Windus. £12.95.
0 7011 2531 4

JACQUELYN HAYANT WITTENBERG:
Faulkner: The Transfiguration of
Kinship
264pp. University of Nebraska Press.
£16.50.
0 8032 4707 9

LYALL H. POWERS:
Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Comedies
285pp. Ann Arbor: University of
Michigan Press. \$18.50.
0 472 06732 3

The blurb that accompanies the uncollected stories leads the ordinary, unchurlishly reader to expect some brilliant additions to the Faulkner canon. Those expectations are soon dashed. The finest things in the collection are, alas, the early versions of "The Bear" and the episodes in the life of the Sartoris family that are expounded in *"The Unvanquished"*. They can, as I have said, be read with pleasure as Faulkner's first adult work, but William Faulkner will be disappointed with them anyway, in the form their author intended. From page 331 onwards, the offerings range from the average to the awful. *"The Sound and the Fury"* is, a literary tale of the probable era, is the kind of thing that a lesser writer, John O'Hara, did better: O'Hara's limited imagination fed on the contemporary form; Faulkner's was one looked down on it. O'Hara could supply a trick ending (usually a car crash) with a confidence that almost disarms scepticism; but Faulkner's honesty ignores an entrancing awkwardness when it comes to ditching the denouement.

"Two Dollar Wife" should have been left to moulder in its archive, along with such deservedly unpublished (until now) stories as "Peter" and "Don Giovanni!" "Once Abroad the Luger (1)" is of the same vintage. The young Faulkner under the influence of Joseph Conrad: its prose is lachrymally adjectival:

'The dinghy moved in darkness, in silence save for small gurgling clucks of water as the nigger pulled the oars. The air was thick with the stink of the sea, and the terrible stroke I could feel the steady and fading surge of the thwart under my thighs. Milky serpentine sheets elongated, mounded with bubbled fire, and the nothingness of which but for the oars I was slapped now, than the beating of the keel with whispering, caressing shocks, as of soft and secret palms. Soon a lesser darkness considered laterally across the water, the Gulf of Honduras, a vague relief against it, and the nigger's rhythmic blobbing, thickened still more. The dinghy lifted with a faint grating rattle and stopped. The new moon hung in the crests of the pines over head.

Faulkner's heart is displayed in a story informed by a believable, as distinct from a melodramatic, darkness—"Miss Zipfita Gunt." The woman who heroically dies is not without significance. It tells, clumsily, of two abandoned women, mother and daughter, who are forced, in turn, to lead straggling lives. They conduct both of them, against all odds, to the end of the road in *Light in August*, and in *Discord* in *The Sound and the Fury*. "Miss Zipfita Gunt" reminds one, despite his many imperfections, that Faulkner's perfection is concerned with endurance.

Why is it that these works of an incontestable stature have never achieved lasting popularity in Britain? The question is worth asking because so many illustrious American critics and writers—Robert Penn Warren, Faulkner, Welty, William Styron, Malcolm Cowley, Robert Linnahan

their value. Yet the plain truth is that Faulkner's early novels—*Sartoris*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, *The Sound and the Fury*—are longer in *verve* on this score than the *Atlantic*, while the later books like the *Snopes* trilogy and *A Fable* were, read from the outset, in a characteristically penetrating essay, V. S. Pritchett told Faulkner that he "became decidedly more of an intellectual."

were dusty and his trousers were soiled, too. But they were of decent serge, sharply creased, and his shirt was soiled, but it was the blue shirt of a soldier, a tie and a stiff-brim straw hat that was quite new, cocked at an angle arrogant and baleful above his stiff face. He did not look like a professional hobo in his proud, clean, soldierly dress, but something definitely rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no trails, no square of earth his home. . . .

Even Sid Row has its aristocrats, and Joe Christmas is one of them. He is a man of great power, but his subtlety, but the way in which he deals with fifteen aimless years in Joe's life in three or four pages is both extremely subtle and absolutely apt: Joe sees America as

Faulkner is a challenging writer because he sees human beings from the inside outwards, whereas most novelists start with the physical appearance and then work inwards. Faulkner dives headlong into the confusion of his people's minds (such as they are), and worries away at their preoccupations until he emerges with what he sees to be the

truth. This machina can appear to be obsessive, for there are times when he seems to be exclaiming over little more than manic trivia. But when it succeeds—as with Benjy in "The Sound and the Fury," and in *Melville's* *The White-Jacket*, in its distance from the Civil War in *Typee* in August—it does so with a disturbing brilliance. Just when monomaniacal threats, Faulkner's sheerest power as a storyteller, usually comes to the narrative's rescue.

It is instructive to remember that Faulkner's fiction once suffered neglect in America; too. It was nnnnnn. When William S. Cowley edited the Portable *Faulkner*, the first volume of his Portable *Faulkner*, the first volume of his dust of a decade began to lift. Today, by contrast, there is no

By Patricia Craig

over twenty-five, previously, self-sufficient and in authority, and able to hunt, really compile a list under the heading "Reasons I might like me"? Would she coyly label the earlier untroubled period of her life B.K. (Before Kramer)? Would she be so sure that her thorny head would be the last to get stuck in the door or the bed and rip out her glasses? Would she lie on the floor, of her apartment, after Kramer has left her, and refuse to budge until the building superintendent coaxes her out from under the door? Would she be so sure that there is something atrocious, not symmetrical - in this bug-like behaviour from someone whose informative years were spent "under the steps with the caterpillars"? Poor Lydia is so low at one point that she is in some respect grateful to her own? The life made no sense. Her life made no sense. Later, she asks herself, "Why bugs? Why anything?"

kind of misery which is com-
pounded by Lydia's near-hysteric
glumness. One of her least endear-
ing traits is her simple-minded
solipsism which perhaps accounts
for her inability to distinguish
between absence and death. She
speaks of her dead father as if he
were alive, and tells everyone that
busy Krainer is dead. He has gone
away to further his career as a film
maker, therefore he is dead to her.

Lyall H. Powers's study, *Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County*, is unadorned lit. crit. It is stuffed with quotations from other academics, many of whom one would not expect to find in the same kind of book, or, for that matter, Eliot whenever it is convenient to his purpose: "Ratliff [in *The Mansion*] is a kind of folksy and naive version of *The Sound and the Fury*," Eliot's *The Sound and the Fury* is "Faulkner's even more helpful equivalent of Eliot's *Shantih, shantih, shantih* that closed *The Waste Land*," thus, and so forth. The book is a good characteristic of Powers's indifference to both style and accuracy. Neither he nor Professor Witternberg comes up with anything fresh or new. The book is a good example of Warren's short essay (published in his *Selected Essays* of 1958) remaining the most acute and understanding critical work on the subject, though

"What is amouur?" asked a German photographer of the 1930s, according to Amatino. "You know, a sort of love suffering look," replied MGM's headshots department. Not many smiles were to be found on the faces of those who were to be photographed. In the 1930s, the definitions John Kuhn has collected for his authoritative, beautifully illustrated book *The Art of the Great Hollywood Portrait Photographers*, stated that "the most common and effective of all the human contortions in the course of a photograph, but then MGM was busy transforming the blonde bombshell into a lady" and what they called "the browwette." Dietrich fures with her hair in a "browwette" innumerable times, as placed by van Sternberg in front of the lens, with that gossamer of a temptress's smile; but "a sort of suffering look" was the essence of her beauty, which she stoically endured, physical or not.

Still photographers had no important if unacknowledged place in the development of motion pictures. Working at first with cumbersome equipment in the bustle of the film street, then later making more use of the portrait studio, they not only helped create the image of the star for the publicity machine, but influenced the images on the screen, the close-up in particular. Often, by effectively contrasting, unnatural lighting, they created for a moment in time a new, more dramatic, and more expressive movement of the camera and their subjects. With the development of the movie camera, many of the most powerful images in films were

By Paul Smith

[illegible]

Cecil B. de Mille, Grafton Greene has recently ramriddled the marriage of George Courou de Mon to Beronide garle in his book "The Ceremony of Darryl F. Zongale, Paul Vanwood reveals in his contribution to the symposium "American History, American Film" (absent from Sprinkle's bibliography), was onerous Zepato's speculative hore, p. 194. Zepato should endorse the values of American democracy, and he should to me that Zepato has a pretty good pattern for a democratic government in his neighbor, the United States—only one civil war in 1707. I am sure that Zepato must have the question many times: "How do they do it in the United States?"

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By Andrew Hislop

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Something better was what Selznick always strove for, though he wavered in his preference for God or Mammon, rather than in his sexual proclivity. He thought he had found a satisfactory balance between the two but, a gambler who spent invisibly and never forgot the financial collapse of his father, he weighed the compromise in Mammon's favour: "I have never gone after honours instead of dollars. But I have understood the relationship between the two."

Ronald Haver has an interest in his subject worthy, in its obsession and detailed knowledge, of David O. Russell. (He has seen *Gone With the Wind* 50 times). But his massive, absorbing *David O. Selznick: Hollywood as Never Written* is a failure in his pursuit of his quarry of *hominem*. He reveals that he "bombaraded" Selznick "with letters, telegrams, and personal appearances, begging for a job" and that he was given "a polite brush-off" when "I presented myself at his home late one night insisting that he hire me to work on his picture, *Seven Years to Arms*." (The brush-off might have been less polite if it had been in the form of a memo.)

On the last page of the book the words "All of the people who worked on this book have tried to make it look as if it were" are placed above the title frame from a film with "Produced by David O. Russell" written below. The people who designed the book has lurched into appropriately lavish abundance of coloured illustrations and photographs. (*Gone With the Wind* was one of the first productions to use colour, and this is a lovely early publicity ploy). But the illustrations striking lack the imagination and sparkling quality of the early black and white portrait photography. Technicolor enhanced the modern epic, not the art of photography. It has time to recover from its introduction.

ties" of the Habsburg empire should no doubt be "Slavic," "circumstance" is surely the result of too facile a rendering of the French for "competition"; the wifa of an Italian rural landlord appears oddly as the "wifely"; and the rendering of *La Grande Peur* as the "Great Fear" is a little like the "Great Fear" snacka irresistibly of Raymond Chandler's history of the French Revolution. More important, the volume represents "a stage in working out a method for the analysis of the past, rather than a fully elaborated and articulated system. It is a report on research in progress, with all the loose ends and unresolved questions which that implies." Professor Sorlin is stronger on the first point, but his comparative typology and model of the historical film, but a preliminary list of definitions, approaches, and working tools, "with some practical examples of how they can be employed."

One of his primary interests is in the type of film through which people endeavour to orient or re-orient themselves and others by the creative evocation of what he calls a "reference period". This is a stage of such fundamental importance in the shaping of their society that they are impelled to form, des-

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a person, likely a woman, wearing a dark, textured garment. The image is heavily degraded with significant noise and artifacts, making details difficult to discern. The person appears to be standing, and the background is light and grainy.

This beautiful portrait (1929) by Ruth Harriet Louise of Nina Mae McKinney, the fifteen-year-old girl from Harlem discovered by King Vidor for his all-black musical Hallelujah!, which reveals a placid composure unperturbed by the large bunch of grapes attached to her right ear, is taken from John Kobal's The Art of the Great Portrait Photographers (reviewed on this page).

crisis, or confirm their concepts of the past and their attitude of the future through the interpretation of that past. Precisely which people we are talking about is not always clear.

Savlin seems to regard his films as essentially social products (auteur theory is so far shunned that you have to refer to the index to find out what he means). But Abel Gance had anything to do with Napoleon Bonaparte, but his work lacks a coherent view of the relations, either in production or in reception, between social groups and films.

France and Russia found reference and pride in their revolutions. Italy in the Risorgimento, the United States in the Civil War, and the greatest part of the book is a subtle and suggestive discussion of some of the films they produced. The admitted difficulty of feeling that the revolution in principle is squarely faced; this is not one of these tame studies of films which reduce them to plot and dialogue, and Savlin shows an acute awareness of these elements, though, as the book progresses, he becomes far too few illustrations. In 1860 he discerns on effort to recon-

cia the Risorgimento and fascism;
 the later Risorgimento films of
 1947-54, the historiography which
 reflects contemporary perplexities
 in rejecting linear evolution and
 opposing systems, that specify
 history as a continuous, connected
 process". October conforms to the
 concept of "socialism in one
 country" by depicting an awkward
 looking image of the Revolution as
 a movement of concentration upon
 and domination of a confined
 space; but in its symbolism of
 oppressive power it offers a moral
 criticism of the old order quite
 different from the dogmas of
 Marxist-Leninism.

It is perhaps with *Le Grand Huition*, however, in which that "fenceable period" is the first. World War, that Sorlin's analysis is most intriguing. He detects "a refusal of history, or at least a desire to remain apart from history", a taking refuge in an enclosed and protected universa (the prisoner-of-war camp) where a "fenceable period" can be found in its limited concerns. Renol's classic becomes in this version a prophetic vision of the situation in which France was to find herself after the defeat of 1940, with the Germans in control again, history (the war) going on somewhere else, and resistance a futile pitting, for some, the purpose fulfilled, in the final escape. One would like to read Sorlin on *Le Règne du loup*.

Historians and students of cinema will find much to debate in this pioneering work; conceptually and methodologically more sophisticated than most of the efforts the former have so far made to come to terms with the medium. Sorlin's analysis is wider than it is, it suggests, for Sorlin has simply taken film as one of several routes, but in an age of mass audio-visual communication, one of the most important, towards understanding the world. Sorlin's perceptive, modified and useful "history" through which the self and consciousness is developed and expressed. Like Marc Bloch's eminent child, he wants to know what history

*They perch in the cherry tree—two fledglings
Not quite hidden, gigglers in the dusk, hatching a plan.
The tree begins to shake them. It is not laughing,
It groans, its limbs beat slowly like prehistoric wings
And skin-soft leaves, yellow and pink and red, cascade.*

So high and so cold, the tree now such a stranger,
Peering out from their eyrie, and down through the wel
of branches, the silent high-riders hear shouts
In their throats. Their colours are lowered, dashes
Of scarlet and white legging it down as light falls,
As darkness comes alone the waiting blue hills

Kevin Crossley-Holland

